

WBS Exodus 1-2:11 – Sept. 30 and Oct. 1, 2025

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1. **INTRO: Jan said this in her overview of Exodus:** *Exodus is a story within a story. Exodus is the theme of redemption that echos throughout scripture. Redemption from what to what? From sin and separation to life and wholeness; redemption from slavery to freedom as children of our Heavenly Father.*

Today we begin to dive into the text which will unfold chapter by chapter aspects of God's redemption story, and as you saw in your study, the landscape for God's people, Israel, is BLEAK in the opening verses. Let's jump in!

2. Where Israel is at and what's happening - Read verses 8-14.

- a. God's people are **trapped, vulnerable, enslaved, suffering under ruthless, oppressive** task masters, and **need deliverance**...They may have remembered, or forgotten in the pain of their suffering, what Joseph said in **Genesis 50:24: God WILL visit you and bring you UP and OUT of this land, INTO the land...the home...the safe place He promised you.**

BUT, HOW is it going to happen?! WHEN?! Will they SURVIVE long enough to experience it?

Here's what Mateer/Motyer says in his Exodus commentary [HOLD UP], which would be a worthy purchase for you this year! **p 17, QUOTE** "There is a contemporary reality about the word of God, so that when we read Exodus we are not just learning of the past, we are learning for the present—our present. This is a LIVING word for us. The people of God—US—are still... scattered in the world, subject to the world's pressures, enduring the world's hardships, suffering the world's sorrows. We would like an answer to our question, WHY LORD...why this?! BUT God does not come down to explain himself. Experiences without explanations—that is what the first chapter of Exodus is all about. **Our only comfort is that God comes to us in the day of darkness and lovingly reassures us that, "It is all right, it is all planned and it will be well."** CLOSE QUOTE.

- b. **We see God's people in the Psalms wrestling to believe**, to make sense of how He is our Savior and Deliverer in the midst of suffering, when deep waters are crashing over them, and there is no foothold, no place to stand, no one around, nothing to grab onto to stay afloat, as Psalm 69 describes. It's human to be restless, and even resentful when we cannot see the goodness of God in our

suffering. Mateer exhorts us in the same way Pastor Anthony did this past week in the sermon from 1 Cor. 3. Our faith needs to mature ...we need to seek to 'grow up' in our faith, if it is to survive the days of darkness that can come upon us in this broken world. We need our faith to be increasingly seasoned with a trusting, resting heart posture and an expectancy that God IS in control, and that he is loving and compassionate to us.

Exodus 1 helps us to know GOD and to learn how to have our eyes open to his provision, like- >

3. **The earthly deliverers who give us tastes of our great Delivering God. There are several women highlighted in our passage this week...women of faith and courage, they ARE the significant human characters who set the stage for what follows in the deliverance of God's people so let's look at them one by one.**

- a. **First, our passage tells us in v 15 of a terrifying command: All male Hebrew babies are to be killed by the Hebrew midwives. However, the moms of these babies are described as 'vigorous' birthers.** Now, I've never heard that word used in the many labor and delivery stories shared with me! 😊 In my small group we've had six babies born, and another one coming any day, and I have yet to hear, **"YES...as the contractions came, I felt so VIGOROUS"...then the baby came.**

Different translations say: *so strong, healthy, LIVELY!* having the vigour of life.

So now our passage highlights three duos of women:

- b. **V 15: Two midwives: Shiprah and Puah who are representatives. WHY mention them, name them? Personalizes it, adds the historical facts, and HONORS these women.**
 - i. **Imagine yourself in their shoes, called by the King who was behind all the oppression, the one responsible for the ruthless affliction to their people. Here's the key phrase about the midwives:**
 - ii. **They feared God** - HE was their bottom line, his words were their priority, even more than their own lives! These women had no idea that their faithfulness THEN would be a part of God's means by which the gospel would be known to us today in 2025!!
 - iii. These midwives were **COURAGEOUS, and also HUMBLE**: they were faithful to the path that God had assigned to them: They get just a brief mention here in chapter 1, then they are GONE, yet they are significant in shining a light on resilient faith in the midst of very dark days.

- iv. **It was God who had ordained their days** to be serving in this way at this time. Their “assigned” path, the one that had been marked out for them.
- v. **These amazing women were life protectors, defenders, and nurturers.**
- vi. **AND they were protected/delivered/provided for by God. Two potential challenges here:**
 - **The** text tells us plainly that they disobeyed what the king commanded them to do. Like Rahab in Joshua 2, we see moments in the history of God’s story where obedience to him supersedes obedience to earthly authorities **without much explanation.**
 - **God blessed their faith with families? So obedience = getting what we want?** Again, the text doesn’t give an explanation except to highlight God’s gracious provision for women who would have been in an extremely vulnerable position, under a ruthless, oppressive regime.
- vii. **Where has God placed you...now...in this season of life to be a source of his life to others?**
 - 1. Easy temptation: GIG Disorder. We want someone else’s story...their role in God’s purposes, not ours.
 - 2. ME: over the years: my own family, a house, but also ministry opps...books, etc.
 - 3. Humbling, painful, yet is God’s invitation, and perhaps correction when our desires, priorities etc. start to sink into orbiting around ourselves.
 - 4. Eph. 2:10...there are good works prepared, and fashioned JUST for you to walk in...He has a story for each of us, which is a part of HIS greater work of redemption!

c. Chapter 2: 1-4 is hard to take in as we learn what happens with Moses’s mother and sister. CAN you imagine this mama’s heart in this GUTWRENCHING situation, and Miriam, the big sister? Watching this unfold in front of her. Running home, “MOM! You won’t believe this!”

- i. Without much commentary, the text describes **how COURAGEOUS they were, and that they were present and available.**
- ii. Serve in heart-wrenching circumstances: sacrifice, profound grief, loss of control. Remember their setting: ruthless oppressors, bitter work. *Is this how Yahweh treats his own? Is THIS the reward they get?! Her son is*

raised by another woman? In the household of our enemy?! God...this doesn't seem like "all is well"...what's happening?!

- iii. **SO HARD, yet: Moses' mom and sister, are living out what God had called them to in *His* story. We** can see it now, but we can also feel the grief and terror of what's happening...**the kind of heartache when you feel like you can't breathe. Their stories only make sense when located within God's story of: rescue, redemption, and new beginnings.** We'll see this over and over this year as Exodus points us towards Christ's death and resurrection, which is the cadence of our lives too, as those united to him: death to self in our salvation/RESCUE, then for all of our days: dying to self, rising with the hope of Jesus, letting go of sin, and new aspects of the life of Christ bearing out in our lives, THROUGH our lives.
- iv. **This mom and daughter serve God's redemptive purposes in Christ, without even knowing it...they were courageous life givers, protectors, defenders, and nurturers.**

d. Finally, verses 5-10 Pharaoh's daughter and her servant girl - Our gracious God brings a pagan woman, a Gentile and the daughter of Israel's oppressive enemy, INTO his redemptive purposes.

- i. This young woman had a maternal heart, she took pity towards the vulnerable enemy, this little Hebrew baby boy. OPPOSITE of her father. And Mateer also brought out the crazy irony that the King of Egypt's evil plans were thwarted by the ones he wasn't threatened by: females and his own DAUGHTER!!
- ii. Now, let's zoom in on something that connects with a common biblical theme: Moses was **PLACED in these dangerous waters...**and he is **drawn out of the water —** a key theme in the history of the Israelites: God allows them to be in literal and metaphorical deep waters...of suffering, attack, consequences of their own sin... and to be DRAWN out as well. This will be a picture of their need for rescue from suffering and sin). **READ Psalm 69:1-3.**
- iii. **Similar to the midwives, these two women served God's purposes, without even knowing it...they were life protectors, defenders, and nurturers.** It's so unexpected that THIS is how God would rescue the baby who would become such a force, God's key leader for his oppressed people. Yet this is so often how God works in our lives, isn't it? Using the

most unexpected, and **often UNWANTED circumstances to bring gospel breakthroughs into our lives?**

- iv. 16 years ago, I had an unbeliever call me out in an excruciating way. She was an instrument in God's hand to EXPOSE and kickstart a PRUNING process that led to repentance from pride and self-righteousness. She had no idea at that moment that, as she confronted me with tears (because I had just wounded her—AGAIN—with my words), that her words would result in a cascading process of transformation in my life.
- v. Sisters: God uses everything, including those who don't love or follow him, for HIS purposes. Our suffering, and pain. And also the unbelieving world's unfairness and meanness which splashes, crashes into our lives. In all of this God is there calling us to trust that he is with us in the darkness, **lovingly reassuring us, "It is all right, I'm here...all will be well."**

e. So FINALLY, the BABY, the other deliverer: MOSES (!), whose life story is prominent in the rest of Exodus. Why him, and not these women? Let's ponder this as we consider the bigger story unfolding in Exodus.

4. **ALL of these people are signposts to our ultimate Deliverer: JESUS.** Each was 'playing their part', "running the race set before them", as Hebrews 12:1 says...a race of faith for which we all have an 'assigned lane', a path filled with God-ordained joys, trials, opportunities to be poured out for the sake of Christ and his kingdom.

- a. **Christ IS our life, and our protector, defender, and nurturer.** Remember last year how we learned the ways he described himself in the gospel of John: I AM the Bread of Life, Living Water, Shepherd, Resurrection and Life, the Truth, Way and True Vine.
- b. Remember what I mentioned earlier, that in the bible we see a **theme of God's people being rescued out of "mighty waters"**. It's hurricane season here on the east coast...imagine finding yourself terrified in 20 foot waves after your boat capsized, hurricane force winds blowing off the New Jersey coast. **YOU NEED rescue...you CAN'T swim yourself out.**
- c. Now, remember this story from Mark 4...Jesus is sleeping in a sinking boat, with his disciples scared and upset with him, "WAKE UP...DON'T YOU CARE?! We're going to drown!" They needed rescue...then:
- d. **With just a few mere words,** Jesus STOPS those winds, commands those waves, SAVES his people. Then, a few words for them, "Why are you so afraid...where is your trust in Me. I'm here...I'm in control...all will be well.

BUT, how does this work in real life? It works through our intimate union with Jesus, his living word in the Scriptures and the presence of the Spirit in our lives, and....

US –the family of God—are a part of God’s provision for each other...lifegivers, nurturers, defenders, courageous and humble instruments in the hands of our Rescuer Jesus.

In the last months, I’ve had some tough circumstances that I couldn’t escape from; I couldn’t rescue myself. In the midst of that, I was asking for prayer and encouragement from friends who are “on the ground with me”. **Yet God did something so tender and sweet to my heart.** Three women from outside New Life, got in touch with me...out of the HOLY BLUE :). within weeks or days from each other. They are sisters in Christ who are like “spiritual daughters” for me, women I’ve invested into with my life and the gospel.

Sarah called me. Christine texted me. Megan emailed me. And NONE knew what was going on in my life. The gospel thread woven through **all three: Ellen, you were on my heart today! Ellen, You’ve been on my mind SO many times this week. Ellen, your name has come up 3X in the last 48 hours. And all three: SO I’m REACHING OUT** to—in so many words—to share God’s love with you, to comfort you, to let you know God sees you, hears your cries, that he is PRESENT. And through their reaching out, **Jesus reminded me...”There there, it will be alright, I’m in control, all will be well.”**

And that emboldened, strengthened, comforted me to keep going, to get up and engage the path that God has for me...including sharing this talk with you.

We’re all in this together, sisters and friends. This IS God’s good plan for his people. When you’re sinking in your faith, when the world around us—politically, economically, spiritually – is scary, maddening, confusing, alienating, His plan is in part, that we are helping each other connect with Jesus, know and love him, trust and surrender to him. We can speak words of life to each other, companion each other with nurture and care, lead and advocate for each other when we don’t have strength or words ourselves. In other words, we get to participate in God’s work of deliverance...being his light and love in days of darkness.

CLOSE in prayer.